



SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

Delivered at the Opening

of

THE THIRD SESSION

of

THE FIFTY-THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

of the

PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA

ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1984

by

HIS HONOUR

THE HONOURABLE ALAN R. ABRAHAM, CD

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY:

WELCOME

1. I welcome you in our Sovereign's name to this Opening of the Third Session of the Fifty-Third General Assembly of the Province of Nova Scotia.
2. My Government was saddened by the recent passing of the distinguished Member for Lunenburg Centre. Bruce Cochran was a gentleman -- in the finest sense of the word. This quality stood in all his life's work -- not only during the decade in which he served in this Chamber, but also in his distinguished military service, business career and his years in the Executive Council for Nova Scotia. Mr. Cochran was a sincere and effective ambassador for the Province and for our tourist industry.
3. My Government was saddened by the death in 1983 of a distinguished former Member of this House, John Will MacDonald. Mr. MacDonald served with distinction as the representative of the people of Pictou East from 1949 until 1956 and from 1960 until 1963.
4. My Government was saddened by the death of George Raymond Deveau, who served in this House as the representative for Richmond from 1933 until 1937.
5. Since we last met, the presence of Their Royal Highnesses The Prince and Princess of Wales, in our Province provided an extraordinary opportunity for Nova Scotians to reaffirm their enduring loyalty to the Crown.
6. Nova Scotians were further honoured last week with the visit to our Province of His Royal Highness Prince Michael of Kent, the personal envoy of Her Majesty The Queen.
7. Nova Scotians look forward to the visit to our Province in September of His Holiness Pope John Paul II. This man of peace and brotherhood will receive a traditional warm Nova Scotia welcome. We will also welcome to this Province the many visitors from the other Atlantic Provinces and from New England who will come to see His Holiness.
8. Nova Scotia's Schooner Bluenose II, will lead the Parade of Tall Ships from Bermuda to Halifax Harbour on June 10th of this year. After a visit to Quebec, the Bluenose will escort the Tall Ships into Sydney Harbour on the seventh of July. The visit of the Tall Ships to Nova Scotia represents a major part of our 1984 tourism promotion.

9. My Government cherishes our heritage and our history. My Government is pleased to join with Nova Scotia's Acadians in celebrating this year the 100th Anniversary of the Acadian flag.

10. Nova Scotia has always been a Province of firsts. This year marks the 75th Anniversary of the first heavier than air, powered flight in the British Empire. Last week's Royal Celebrations were a suitable commemoration of that event, which took place on Baddeck Bay on February 23, 1909. The pilot of that historic flight, the late J.A.D. McCurdy, is one of my distinguished predecessors in this Office. His partner, the late Casey Baldwin, later represented Victoria County in this Chamber.

11. My Government is pleased that the Board of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities will meet in Nova Scotia next month.

12. The worst recession in half a century is abating. Last year at this time my Government announced policies to lead Nova Scotia out of that recession. Difficult and costly economic and social policy decisions were faced by my Government. The outcome in 1983 was as my Government predicted. Nova Scotia led all the provinces in economic recovery. This result was accomplished through solid leadership, sound management and faith in Nova Scotians' ability and hard work.

13. According to the Conference Board of Canada and all other economic assessments, 1984 will be a year of continued growth in Nova Scotia. My Government foresees difficulties throughout Canada, but on balance the economic indicators in Nova Scotia are very positive. My Government will continue to apply dedicated leadership and resolve to the issues facing Nova Scotians.

14. With regard to Nova Scotia's long-term economic development, my Government has just released a White Paper on Economic Development. It presents a framework of initiatives and policies to guide development through the 1980's and into the 1990's. This major economic document was prepared in close consultation with the private sector and represents a joint effort to assess both the challenges facing the provincial economy and the means to expanded levels of economic growth.

15. The central thrust of my Government's economic policy will be to improve our competitiveness on the national and international scene as the key to improving incomes and employment opportunities for all Nova Scotians. Policies geared toward building our human resource strengths and improving business environment, will form the backbone of my Government's program to improve the competitiveness of all sectors of the Province's economy.

16. During coming years, recommendations of the White Paper will form the underlying basis for my Government's activities to promote economic development throughout Nova Scotia.

17. In 1984 my Government will proceed with important leadership steps in five key areas:

- Development of Nova Scotia's Primary Resources
- Human Resource Development and Technological Change
- New Economic Directions for Business
- Manufacturing and Trade Sector Enhancement
- Government Services to People

DEVELOPMENT OF PRIMARY RESOURCES

18. The primary resources sector of the Nova Scotia economy has provided in the past and will continue to provide a principal source of economic growth for the Province. My Government will place major emphasis in the coming year on significant resource development as a major generator of new income and employment opportunities.

19. With respect to offshore development, my Government has been encouraged by recent levels of economic and planning activity. Our policy in 1984 will continue to be the identification and promotion of industrial opportunities, using exploration and preproduction activity as a means of building internationally competitive industries and enhanced employment levels.

20. My Government is working closely with the Government of Canada to develop legislation for the implementation of the Nova Scotia-Canada Off-shore Agreement in the House of Commons and any new legislation or amendments required to be introduced in this House.

21. In 1978 sixty-five per cent of Nova Scotia's electricity was generated by foreign oil. My Government is pleased to announce that by the end of 1984, less than fifteen per cent of our electricity will be generated from oil. This improvement results from the development of our indigenous resources of coal and water as sources for electrical power generation. The first Tidal Power Plant in North America at Annapolis Royal will shortly be generating electricity.

22. My Government is pleased with the development in Southwestern Nova Scotia of North America's only tin mine. This mine heralds a new era for mining in the Province as new geological techniques uncover more of our hidden wealth. Prospecting and mineral activity in Nova Scotia are on the increase.

23. My Government intends to conclude a new Mineral Development Sub-Agreement with the Federal Government in the coming year. This Agreement will implement a major new geo-science program, significantly expanding our research and technology base, and will introduce major new economic and market development improvements in the mineral sector.

24. In 1983 the Nova Scotia offshore fishery faced financial crisis. My Government was determined to devise a solution to the problem which best reflected the entrepreneurial nature of those involved in the industry and was pleased to participate in the restructuring in co-operation with the private sector and the Government of Canada. My Government was pleased that the conclusion of negotiations resulted in the private sector continuing to manage this most important resource in our economy.

25. The Department of Fisheries is in the process of negotiating with the Federal Government for a multi-million dollar Fisheries Sub-Agreement. These negotiations, which are proceeding on the initiative of my Government, focus on strengthening the in-shore and near-shore sectors of the industry, with particular emphasis on assistance to the independent fishermen and fish processors.

26. As part of the revitalization of the Nova Scotia sport fishery, my Government will distribute 700,000 trout to lakes and urban fishery areas and will, as well, place two million trout eggs in good feeder stream habitats.

27. It is the intention of the Department of Fisheries to strive for the development of a comprehensive management plan in all segments of the Province's fishery, and to ensure reasonable provincial input in these plans.

28. My Government will call tenders for the construction of a new animal science teaching and research facility at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College. My Government looks forward to the graduation in 1985 of the first Agriculture Science students who will benefit from this facility.

29. My Government will introduce legislation to enable the Department of Agriculture and Marketing to establish a meat inspection program in the Province.

30. My Government will support the continued expansion in grain handling facilities under the jurisdiction of the Nova Scotia Grain Commission.

31. My Government recognizes the importance of agricultural marketing and will increase promotion of Nova Scotia fruit and vegetable products both at home and abroad.

32. My Government has committed substantial funding assistance to the Atlantic Winter Fair and looks forward to the opening of the fair in its new home.

33. A Royal Commission has been examining the background and opportunities for Nova Scotia's largest resource based industry for the past two years. The Royal Commission on Forestry has been studying the industry in all its dimensions and is expected to report its findings later this year.

34. My Government will undertake a major silvicultural improvement program this year. This program, through the Canada-Nova Scotia Forest Resources Development Agreement, will involve the planting of 12 million seedlings in Nova Scotia's forests.

35. Support for the Nova Scotia Woodlot Owners and Operators Association will continue.

36. My Government will commence development of two major Provincial Parks and will establish a sport fishing opportunity for the disabled at Lewis Lake Provincial Park.

37. My Government looks forward to the report of the Select Committee on Tourism. This Committee held public hearings on that vital resource industry in all areas of the Province. My Government is committed to development and expansion of this industry. This Select Committee will make its report and recommendations with regard to the future of this industry during this Session of the House of Assembly.

38. My Government looks forward to the development of a new Sub-Agreement on Tourism with the Government of Canada.

39. My Government is pleased to note that with the co-operation of the Government of Canada, steps will be taken to redevelop one of Nova Scotia's most historic waterways. The Shubenacadie Canal will, in the coming years, become a major attraction to Nova Scotians and tourists alike.

40. My Government is pleased that the Nova Scotia Tattoo, a major focal point of Nova Scotia's colourful history, will again serve as a major attraction of the tourist season.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

41. In recognition of the demands of the workplace, my Government will, among other significant initiatives:

- Appoint, in the Department of Education, a Deputy Minister with the direct responsibility for Vocational and Technical Training reflecting the changing educational requirements of the 1980's and 1990's.
- Appoint, in the Department of Labour and Manpower, a Deputy Minister whose primary role will be the identification, in conjunction with the private sector, of the manpower needs of the workplace, to ensure that employment opportunities and business activity are not limited by skill shortages among Nova Scotians.
- Establish a Human Resources Development Committee consisting of senior officials of Education, Labour and Manpower, Development, Policy Board and Social Services to co-ordinate provincial manpower policy and program delivery.
- Strengthen private sector involvement in training by expanding the role of the Provincial Manpower Board.
- Establish a Youth Initiatives Office within the Department of Labour and Manpower to co-ordinate youth-oriented activities of the Provincial Government.

42. One of Nova Scotia's greatest resources is its youth, and my Government places high priority on assisting young people to find business opportunities and productive jobs. We will again this year carry out a Summer Employment Program with emphasis on students and unemployed young people.

43. In addition, a new Youth Entrepreneurial Skills Program will be introduced to provide non-student youths with interest-free loans to establish viable long-term business ventures. Students will also be eligible under this program to set up summer businesses.

44. These initiatives are part of an overall effort to equip youth with employment experience and work skills so that entry to the permanent job market is made easier.

45. With a commitment to greater input from labour and the business community in the skills training area, my Government will significantly expand its activity in offering co-operative training programs which will have Nova Scotians acquiring marketable skills by a more effective use of hands-on workplace experience as a supplement to traditional classroom instruction.

46. As evidence of my Government's commitment to providing education opportunities relevant to an increasingly technical age, the coming year will see the commencement of the Sackville Vocational School, the Nova Scotia Nautical Institute and a major expansion of computer-related education in the Province's public schools.

47. In looking to long-term competitiveness in the domestic and international marketplace, my Government fully recognizes the vital role of technological innovation and growth in levels of productivity. This is important not only for the attraction and expansion of industry, but also for the survival of enterprises in the resource, manufacturing, and service sectors, regardless of their size.

48. In 1983, the Province led in the establishment of a Computer-Aided Design Centre at the Technical University of Nova Scotia. This Centre will provide design and engineering resources to the private sector, and overcome some of the costs associated with adoption of this new technology.

49. Computer-aided design, computer-aided manufacturing and advances in micro-electronics offer opportunities for product innovation, improved product quality, lower costs, and greater competitiveness. With this in mind, my Government has developed specific investment proportion strategies which focus on firms possessing technological capabilities which are especially beneficial to Nova Scotia. The results of these efforts will be seen in new joint ventures and licensing agreements, sub-contracting, increased import replacement, and growing technological sophistication.

50. In support of technological innovation, my Government will increase support to the Nova Scotia Research Foundation Corporation. In addition, my Government will designate the Corporation as the Centre responsible for advising the Government on scientific research and technological innovation in relation to development policies.

51. In 1984, my Government, in co-operation with the Federal Government, intends to develop a series of measures to facilitate industrial innovation. There will be particular emphasis on the transfer of technology from our universities and Government research centres to industries and businesses in the Province.

NEW ECONOMIC DIRECTIONS

52. Financial incentives in the form of a research and development investment tax credit will be introduced to complement Federal tax incentives for R&D announced in 1983. This measure will further reduce the costs of technological innovation in Nova Scotia. At the same time legislative amendments will be introduced to exempt from Provincial sales tax those items used in research and development.

53. My Government will establish a joint public and private Task Force on investment and taxation to carry out a comprehensive review of all municipal and provincial tax levers to stimulate investment. The Task Force will examine simplification of the tax system and avenues for Government to consult with the private sector in drafting new tax measures.

MANUFACTURING AND TRADE

54. My Government continues to place a high priority on trade development as markets in the United States recover. We look to this market for constancy and export growth opportunities in 1984. My Government, in collaboration with the Federal and other provincial governments, is exploring the potential for freer trade arrangements between the two countries.

55. In support of increased tourism, energy exports, technological co-operation, and general trade with our New England neighbours, my Government is seeking new vehicles for co-operation and communication. Assistance is being given to private sector groups now working to establish an Atlantic Canada - New England Business Council.

56. My Government welcomes the commencement of operations this year of the new international trade zone in Sydney. We look forward to the success of this important venture.

57. My Government is participating in a series of meetings between public and private sectors in the New England, Quebec and Atlantic regions. One of these, a conference on trade opportunities, will be held in Halifax this spring.

58. My Government is encouraged by the establishment of new businesses and the expansion of existing businesses to service the offshore. There is also increased activity in harbours around the Province, principally in the repair, supply and maintenance of oil rigs.

59. Plans are proceeding on the 1984 Canadian Offshore Resources Exhibition, an event that will once again be a major attraction and showplace for international industry. This exhibition is now the third largest such trade show in the world.

60. The Select Committee on the Offshore has completed its deliberations and will soon be reporting to the House of Assembly on its detailed examination of current and future economic developments regarding Nova Scotia's offshore exploration activity.

61. My Government looks forward to the opening of the World Trade Centre this year, and with it, enhanced opportunities for tourism, convention trade and product sales.

62. A new business plan for Sysco will be prepared this year to form the basis for discussion among the company, the Province and the Federal Government regarding funding for the next phase of modernization. The quality and competitiveness of Sysco Rails has been confirmed by large orders of rails for domestic Canadian use as well as foreign orders.

63. Halifax Industries Limited, under a new partnership agreement, is enjoying a substantial increase in activity. With the addition of the new Panamax floating drydock to its facilities, this should increase further in the years to come.

SERVICES TO PEOPLE

64. My Government will maintain its philosophy of steady improvement in services to people, with quality programs to help make Nova Scotia an even better place in which to live and work.

65. My Government places the highest priority on continued improvements for senior citizens and believes they should be fully consulted regarding improvements in income support and pensions. For this purpose, my Government is convening the first ever Nova Scotia Conference on Aging in June of this year. At this conference senior citizens will give intensive consideration to the report of the Royal Commission on Pensions; a statement on Aging by the Senior Citizens' Secretariat; and the report on Retirement Age by the Nova Scotia Senior Citizens' Commission.

66. My Government will introduce new initiatives in Home Life Supports.

67. Major improvements in Nova Scotia's licensed day care centres and child development centres will take place April 1st. My Government will further develop standards for infant day care by November of this year.

68. Action by my Government has resulted in Nova Scotia's licensed Homes for Special Care completing or undertaking approved installations and achieving fire and life safety levels at least equal to those of any other province.

69. The Task Force on Homes for Special Care has virtually completed its work and my Government will meet with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities to determine the appropriate implementation response.

70. My Government now provides monthly Family Benefits and access to prescription drugs free of charge to 12,000 disabled recipients in Nova Scotia. Improvements in provisions relating to accessibility, and deepened commitment by my Government to the objectives of the World Decade of the Disabled are being prepared.

71. My Government will provide financial support for additional emergency shelters in Nova Scotia and will take further measures to suppress domestic violence and abuse and neglect of children.

72. Amendments to the Children's Services Act will be placed before you.

73. My Government appreciates the importance of the contribution of the residential construction industry to the provincial economy. As predicted by my Government a year ago, 1983 was a year of extraordinary recovery for that industry. Total housing starts in the Province were up 54 per cent over 1982 levels, compared to a national average increase of only 29 per cent.

74. Home Ownership continues to be an important goal for Nova Scotians. My Government will continue to provide support for Nova Scotians purchasing new homes.

75. My Government is actively working with the Board of Directors of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, and other levels of Government and the private sector, towards the establishment of a permanent home for a Provincial Art Gallery.

76. My Government will introduce legislation to implement most of the recommendations made by the Commission of Inquiry on Rents.

77. You will be asked to consider a new Mobile Home Accommodation Act which will recognize the special needs of people living in mobile home parks.

78. At the request of, and with the support of a great many Nova Scotians, my Government will continue to ensure that the importance and vitality of the traditional family unit is not jeopardized by the unbridled availability of pornographic and violent material.

79. My Government, in consultation with municipal governments, has implemented a number of beneficial reforms in the area of municipal affairs. Among them:

- The development of an unconditional grant fund.
- An increase of provincial grants in lieu of taxes.
- The establishment of the Municipal Finance Corporation.
- The creation of the Nova Scotia Municipal Board.

80. The need for co-operative reform continues. To this end my Government will soon establish a Provincial-Municipal Fact Finding Committee. This Committee will be composed of Members of the Executive Council and the Executive of the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities.

81. Amendments will be introduced to the Municipal Grants Act. As a result of these amendments, additional funding will become available to the Province's municipal units.

82. You will be asked to consider amendments to various other Acts relating to municipalities.

83. Over the last five years, my Government has given a mandate for a vigorous program of highway safety education. The result has been a reduction in the number of deaths and injuries on our highways. There is, however, still room for substantial improvement. Therefore, you will be asked to consider comprehensive highway safety legislation. Included in this legislative package will be measures with respect to seat belts, impaired drivers and alcoholic rehabilitative measures for impaired drivers.

84. The successful development of the Fairview Cove Container Pier operation has resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of world class container ships in Halifax Harbour. Therefore, my Government, in co-operation with the Government of Canada, has embarked upon a program of bridge protection for the two harbour bridges.

85. The Government Committee to study traffic problems, with particular emphasis on possible ferry transportation from the Woodside and Bedford areas, will continue its deliberations with a view to making recommendations to Government within a year.

86. My Government looks forward to the Report of the Select Committee on Volunteer Fire Services. The Committee's report will be tabled during this Session of the House of Assembly.

87. The Select Committee on Health has now completed a series of public hearings it conducted throughout the Province. A complete draft of its report is expected to be ready before September, 1984.

88. Planning is proceeding for the provision of veterans' beds at Fishermen's Memorial Hospital in Lunenburg, Soldiers' Memorial Hospital in Middleton, in addition to the Veterans' Pavilion at Camp Hill.

89. The construction of the Glace Bay Hospital will proceed. The expansion of the Colchester Hospital is in the final planning steps. Renovations at the Northside General Hospital are in the final stage of construction.

90. My Government will continue to make every effort to upgrade the recognition, understanding and services for the learning disabled, and to extend those services wherever possible.

91. Our Province has a long and distinguished history of commitment to Post Secondary Education and in fact has more Post Secondary Education places per capita than does any other province in Canada. The Royal Commission established by my Government last year has completed the first phase of its inquiry. My Government looks forward to the recommendations of the Royal Commission, to assist in making funding and program delivery decisions which will maintain the integrity of this most essential provincial activity.

92. My Government is taking steps to require teacher training institutions to ensure that every graduate has had a full program in special education courses.

93. The Special Committee on Occupational Health and Safety has been listening to the concerns of those involved in the workplace throughout the Province. This Special Committee, chaired by the distinguished former Member of this House, and former Member of the Executive Council, Dr. T.J. McKeough, is looking into health and safety of Nova Scotian workers and will report to the Minister of Labour and Manpower later this year.

94. My Government awaits the report of the Select Committee on Emergency Measures Organization. This Committee has been reviewing the present legislation with regard to Emergency Measures and will present a report to this Session of the House of Assembly.

95. My Government has taken a full and active role in meetings last year and this, leading up to next week's First Minister's Conference on Aboriginal Constitutional Issues.

96. My Government will introduce a new Securities Act.

97. You will be asked to consider amendments to various Provincial Acts, including the Insurance Act, the Expropriation Act, the Motor Carrier Act, and the Motor Vehicle Act.

98. My Government is committed to:

- Serving all Nova Scotians;
- Enhancing the quality of life;

- Protecting our environment;
- Improving educational, health and social services delivery systems;
- Building a competitive economy;
- Developing our resource industries;
- Advancing new technological change;
- Creating more job opportunities;
- Increasing markets for Nova Scotia goods and services at home and abroad.

These goals of my Government open new and exciting challenges for Nova Scotians. Working together, labour, business and government shall build a more competitive Nova Scotia.

99. The Public Accounts for the year ended March 31, 1983 will be presented for your consideration as will Estimates for the fiscal year to begin April 1, 1984.

100. To these and all other matters which may come before you I ask your careful attention, praying that sound judgment and Divine Providence may guide you in all your deliberations and decisions.

101. God Save The Queen. God Bless Nova Scotia. God Bless Canada.

POOR

QUALITY

ORIGINAL

